

homes without warning, auctioning off their property, and blocking their access to bury their deceased in a place of their choosing, instead requiring them to use a mass grave site.

In its 2021 Report to Congress on International Religious Freedom, the United States Department of State reported that government officials continue to disseminate anti-Baha'i messaging using both traditional and social media. Further, the community is so stigmatized that private sector employers often refuse to hire those of the Baha'i or dismiss them from their jobs.

Today, I call on my House colleagues to stand with Martin Gorji and every member of the Baha'i community in Iran. I call on the Iranian government to immediately release not only Mr. Gorji, but every prisoner of conscience in Iran who is incarcerated simply for their beliefs. It is time to end this egregious repression of religious minorities.

INTRODUCTION OF THE UNITED STATES COLORED TROOPS CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the United States Colored Troops Congressional Gold Medal Act, which would award the Congressional Gold Medal to the African Americans who served with Union forces during the Civil War. Approximately 200,000 African American men served in the Union Army and 19,000 African American men served in the Union Navy. I am proud to present this overdue expression of our national appreciation for these remarkable individuals. Senator CORY BOOKER has introduced the companion bill.

Since the colonial era, African Americans have served the United States in times of war. While African American men served in the Navy since its establishment, there was resistance to enlisting them to take up arms for the Union Army at the start of the Civil War. It was not until January 1, 1863, when President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, that the Union Army was ordered to receive African American men. On May 22, 1863, the United States War Department issued General Order Number 143, which established the Bureau of Colored Troops for the recruitment and organization of regiments of the Union Army composed of African American men, called the United States Colored Troops (USCT). Leaders such as Frederick Douglass encouraged African Americans to enlist to advance the cause of citizenship: "Once let the [B]lack man get upon his person the brass letter, 'U.S.', let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder and bullets in his pocket, there is no power on [E]arth that can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship," wrote Douglass.

African American sailors constituted a significant segment of the Union Navy, making up 20 percent of the Navy's total enlisted force. Although there were rank restrictions on African Americans in the Navy before the Civil War, this policy changed after the establishment of the USCT, when the Union Navy started to compete with the Union Army for

enlistment of African Americans. Yet, in practice, most African Americans could not advance beyond the lowest ranks of "boy" and "landsmen." In the Union Army, the USCT fought at Milliken's Bend, Louisiana; in Petersburg, Virginia; and in Nashville, Tennessee, among other sites. The USCT at first were paid less, were given used uniforms and poor equipment and could never become officers. Many USCT were assigned as guards on fortifications throughout the Union, including the Defenses of Washington, which, by 1865, was one of the most heavily fortified cities in the world. During the Civil War, African American women were not allowed to formally enlist as soldiers or sailors, though they served as nurses, cooks, spies and scouts for the Union Army and the Union Navy.

For generations after the Civil War, the contributions of the African Americans who served with Union forces were excluded from historical memory. Not until Public Law No. 102-412, which I sponsored and which authorized the establishment of a memorial on federal land to honor African Americans who served with Union forces during the Civil War, were they officially commemorated. The African American Civil War Memorial, located in the District of Columbia, features a bronze statue of soldiers, an African American sailor and family, and is surrounded by The Wall of Freedom, which lists the names of the members of the USCT.

Patriots and heroes who rose in service to a nation that would not fully recognize them, the African Americans who served the Union during the Civil War deserve our recognition for their contributions to the grant of emancipation and citizenship for nearly 4 million enslaved people and to the preservation of the Union.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

RECOGNIZING THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF FIRST BANK OF ALABAMA

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 175th Anniversary of First Bank of Alabama.

The City of Talladega was incorporated in 1835 and as it began to grow and thrive, Major James Isbell opened a banking business in 1848. Through the Civil War and reconstruction, the bank stayed open and in 1893 applied for and received a National Bank Charter. The name of the bank was officially changed to The Isbell National Bank of Talladega.

In 1963, after almost 100 years in the "old bank" building, Isbell National Bank moved to a new location on North Street East.

In 1968, the Talladega Superspeedway officially opened. The following year, the bank opened a full service branch in Lincoln, Alabama. In 1988, another branch was opened in Munford, Alabama.

In 2015, The First National Bank of Talladega Board of Directors voted to make the bank a state-chartered bank and adopt the new name, First Bank of Alabama. In 2017, First Bank acquired Bank of Wedowee and ex-

panded their presence into Randolph County. The following year, First Bank opened their seventh office in Clay County and in 2020 an office in Calhoun County.

In 2021, SouthFirst acquisition was finalized, and the bank added 2 more offices in Sylacauga and expanded into Chilton County. In 2022, two offices were added in Cleburne County.

On February 14, 2023, the Annual Shareholder meeting will be held at the Talladega office to celebrate the anniversary of the bank. First Bank is Alabama's oldest, continuously operated bank in the State of Alabama, third oldest in the Southeast and 36th oldest in the country. The bank is led by Talladega native, J. Chad Jones, the bank's 13th President and CEO.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing this milestone for my friends at First Bank of Alabama and wishing them a happy 175th anniversary.

OPPOSITION TO H.J. RES. 26 DISAPPROVING THE ACTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COUNCIL IN APPROVING THE REVISED CRIMINAL CODE ACT OF 2022

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 26 a resolution disapproving the action of the District of Columbia Council in approving the Revised Criminal Code Act of 2022.

This resolution is not only a brazen and misguided measure seeking to uphold decades of racially systemic policies of criminal injustice, it is an insulting attempt to trample on the rights and the will of the people in the District of Columbia.

By subjecting thousands of Black residents of Washington D.C. to criminalization and incarceration, the Revised Criminal Code Act of 2022 was the first comprehensive revision of the D.C. code since the year 1901, something that should've been revised long before.

However, in contrast to the majority of other states, D.C. did not update its criminal statutes throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

As a result of the antiquated legislation, which had been in place for decades, the human rights and freedoms of Washingtonians has been compromised, resulting in D.C. having one of the highest imprisonment rates in the nation, whereby Black males account for more than 95 percent of those who are behind bars.

The 2022 revision was a necessary push forward, and for the Republicans within this congress to attempt to undo these revisions, shows the true opinion and intentions of the party.

The revisions helped to correct many of the faults that the District of Columbia continuously ran into with the district itself making the necessary corrections with the support of the public.

The D.C. Criminal Code Reform Commission was formed by the D.C. Council to revise the statutes to guarantee that the revisions of offenses and punishments are precise, consistent, reasonable, and constitutional.

The District of Columbia Public Defender Service, the District of Columbia Attorney General, legal professionals, and the general public were among the sources of input that the Commission consulted.

Members of Congress should not use their own policy judgment to replace that of the elected officials within D.C.

Prior to these revisions simple assault carried a sentence of less than six months in prison, while the threat of simple assault carried a 20-year sentence.

Possession of self-defense spray and possession of a fully automatic machine gun carried the same maximum penalty of one year.

Some offenses can be traced back to the District's Black Codes and Slave Codes and others that were introduced by segregationists from states outside D.C.

The almost 700,000 individuals who live in Washington, D.C., are capable of self-government and through the Revised Criminal Code Act of 2022, proved themselves as such.

Congress is not judge, jury, and executioner and should not overstep its place within Washington, D.C.

HONORING SHERIFF GARY DENNIS TINDEL

HON. DOUG LAMALFA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life, career and the memory of former Yuba County Sheriff Gary Dennis Tindel. During his nearly 30-year career at the Yuba County Sheriff's Department, Sheriff Tindel worked at all levels, starting in the County jail and working his way to be elected Sheriff. His moral character and strong work ethic set him apart from others. Most importantly, Sheriff Tindel was a family man; setting a great example for his children and grandchildren to follow. His public service commitment was to put community and service before self.

Gary was born on October 24, 1947, to parents Marvin and Antonette Tindel in Marysville, California. He was a loving brother to his two siblings, and in those early years he was often seen in his Dad's welding machine shop and neighborhood store, Tindel's Market. He also attended St. Joseph's Catholic Church. His early learning of faith, along with his parents' love and strong moral code, set him on his path of public service.

Gary graduated Marysville High School in 1965, attending college first at UC Davis for a short time, then transferring to CSU Chico where he graduated with a degree in Engineering. Upon graduation, Gary sought a public service career in law enforcement, joining the Yuba County Sheriff's Department in 1971. He also attended the Butte College Police Academy. Gary was introduced to Irene Chesini in 1973, and were married in 1975. By 1979, they had three children: Josh, Michelle, and Alice. Gary would also earn a master's degree in Criminal Justice from CSU Sacramento in 1980, while continuing to climb up the ranks in the Yuba County Sheriff's Office.

After many years of dedicated work, Gary was elected Sheriff in 1990 and would go on to serve two terms as Sheriff. Additionally, he

taught law enforcement classes at Butte College, and was active in both the California State Sheriffs' Association and California State Coroners Association. Gary would go on to work for the Marin County Coroner's office as the Assistant Coroner for about 10 years. During that time, he continued to stay involved with the California State Coroners Association, even serving as President for four years. Upon his retirement, he moved back to Yuba City to enjoy time being a grandparent.

Gary continued to serve his community, church, family, and friends in retirement. As an active member of the Kiwanis Club, he helped with local little leagues and Boy Scouts. He coordinated many fundraising dinners for many causes. He also enjoyed taking family vacations and spending time in Lake Tahoe with his family. Gary held another deep passion for fishing.

Gary will be missed by many friends and family. From his outstanding public service career to his volunteerism; Gary's influence will be felt for a very long time. Gary is survived by his wife Irene, his children Josh, Michelle, and Alicia, and his seven grandchildren. Sheriff Tindel was a true friend to many. I thank him for his service to the people of the North State. May he rest in eternal peace. God Bless.

H.R. 185—TO TERMINATE THE REQUIREMENT IMPOSED BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION FOR PROOF OF COVID-19 VACCINATION FOR FOREIGN TRAVELERS

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 185, to terminate the requirement imposed by the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for proof of COVID-19 vaccination for foreign travelers.

H.R. 185 is hasty attempt to reverse the order issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention without any proper planning or preparation.

The Amended Order Implementing Presidential Proclamation on Advancing the Safe Resumption of Global Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic was first published on April 7, 2022, and was implemented to save lives.

The CDS order imposes necessary restrictions on the entry of noncitizens into the United States by air travel unless they are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or otherwise attest that they will take public health measures to prevent the spread of the disease.

Similar restrictions have been implemented and enforced worldwide, and countries like Thailand have had to reimplement such restrictions after lifting them.

Now is not the time to roll back protections, only to be in a place where we will need to reimpose more onerous and unwanted lockdowns and shutdowns across the country.

Yet, H.R. 185 would nullify any successor or subsequent orders that require foreign persons traveling by air to show proof of a

COVID-19 vaccination as a condition of entry, as well as prohibit the use of federal funds to administer or enforce such a requirement.

Mr. Speaker, the wellbeing of the American People should hold the utmost importance and any act against their health and wellbeing should be strongly condemned.

Since March 2020, life in Houston—like most of the world—has been upended.

Houston, Texas is the 4th largest city in the country and is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse cities in the United States.

In addition to Houston being a culturally diverse city and home to international students, residents, and families from all over the world, Houston also serves as an international hub for millions of people all over the world who travel to my city every year for both leisure and business.

According to the Houston First Corporation, a record 22.3 million people from around the world visited Houston in 2018.

Notably, the 2023 Houston Rodeo season, scheduled for Feb. 28–March 19, is the largest rodeo in the world and contributes significantly to our city's economy. In 2022, this event attracted over 2.4 million international travelers from around the world.

Despite the senseless and disingenuous politicization of the COVID-19 vaccine, it has and continues to save countless lives—particularly in my home state and internationally rich travel hub of Houston, Texas.

In Houston, specifically Harris County, there have been 1,058,476 confirmed COVID-19 cases, 7,839 active cases, 1,041,939 recovered, and 8,589 deaths. Furthermore, Texas as a state has recorded 8.24 million cases and 93,366 deaths.

In the United States, there have been 102 million confirmed cases and 1.11 million deaths.

And across the globe, there have been 671 million confirmed cases and 6.83 million deaths.

These statistics serve as a harrowing reminder of the gravity of this epidemic and the caution we should be taking in ensuring preventative responses and remaining vigilant against the spread of COVID-19.

Rolling back critical vaccination policies put in place to protect Americans through hasty measures such as H.R. 185, undermines the national mission and unified efforts nationwide to prevent future cases infiltrating our communities.

While progress has certainly been made in protecting Americans from this deadly virus, we cannot stand for the erosion of such progress through ill-conceived and politicized measures.

As we continue to make strides to prevent and eradicate current and future variants plaguing our cities, states, nation, and world, let it be known that H.R. 185 would only serve to disregard the health and well-being of all Americans, foolishly jeopardizing our lives and the ongoing fight to keep everyone healthy and safe.

Instead of halting vital funding and vaccine policies for international travelers, without a plan or forethought of the disastrous impact that will inevitably result, it is imperative that we stand together in planning and preparing for smart policy shifts that will allow our country to effectively and safely ease back into some sense of normalcy.

Anything less is an abdication of our governmental duties and an insult and danger to the welfare of all those we are sworn to serve.